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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: JANUARY 06, 2009

Summary: The Indian government's decision to handover a "dossier" to Pakistan regarding alleged "involvement of Pakistani nationals in Mumbai attacks" dominated front pages on Tuesday. All major dailies highlighted Assistant Secretary Boucher's remarks that the Mumbai "attacks have links to Pakistan or lead to Pakistani soil." Reports and photographs of his (A/S Boucher's) meeting with Pakistani officials and receiving of "Hilal-e-Quaid-i-Azam" in recognition of his services to "promote a stable, broad-based and long-term Pak-U.S. relationship," was extensively displayed. "Israeli raids on Hamas targets" continued to garner extensive media coverage. All newspapers reported that "Israel government fended off worldwide calls for a ceasefire."

Most newspapers ran critical editorials on "silence" and "insensitivity" of world community over Israeli aggression. Commenting on the U.S. role as the "blind supporter of Israeli barbarities", English daily, "The Nation," noted that "this would further strengthen the anti-U.S. sentiment across the Muslim world and provide the extremists and terrorists a cause clhbre, besides further marginalizing pro-U.S. and moderate regimes in the Arab and Muslim world." Another English daily, "Dawn," observed that the "fire and smoke which have enveloped Gaza's skies serve as a better recruitment poster for the Taliban than any sermons in mosques or rallying cries emanating from Al Qaeda cells." The Urdu daily, "Ausaf," noted that the "policies of Muslim countries are beyond our understanding as every Muslim state is doing nothing except rendering lips services." End Summary.

News Stories

"Mumbai Attacks - India Gives Its Side Of The Story; Pakistan Says It Is Examining Information" "The News" (01/06)

"India handed over to Pakistan on Monday what it termed evidence of the Mumbai terror attacks. The 'information dossier' was first handed over to Pakistan's High Commissioner Shahid Malik by Indian Secretary for External Affairs Shivshankar Menon in New Delhi.... There is nothing new in the 'information dossier' Indian High Commissioner Satyabrata Pal handed over to Foreign Secretary Salman Bashir at the Foreign Office, Western diplomatic sources told 'The News.' Meanwhile, Pakistan said it was examining the contents of the 'information' passed on to it and will 'evaluate' it."

"Attackers Have Links That Lead To Pakistani Soil: U.S." "Daily Times" (01/06)

"U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher praised on Monday the exchange of information between India and Pakistan on the Mumbai terror attacks, but said it is clear the 'attacks have links to Pakistan or lead to Pakistani soil,' reported the APP news agency."

"Boucher Awarded For Promoting Pak-U.S. Ties" "Daily Times" (01/06)

"President Asif Ali Zardari conferred the prestigious Hilal-e-Quaid-e-Azam award on United States Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher at a special ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr on Monday. A statement by the Presidency said the award has been conferred on Boucher in the field of 'Services to Pakistan.' The citation read out on the occasion said Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs Ambassador Boucher has been instrumental in promoting a stable, broad-based and long-term Pakistan-U.S. relationship. Boucher thanked the government of Pakistan for conferring the award on him."

"Mumbai Attack Culprits Must Be Punished: U.S." "Dawn" (01/06)

"The United States urged Pakistan on Monday to track down and punish culprits involved in the Mumbai terror attacks and welcomed New Delhi's move to share information with Islamabad. Talking to reporters after meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, National Security Adviser Mehmood Durrani and presidential aide Salman Farooqi, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher said that the Indian move 'would help Pakistan track down the culprits.'"

"U.S. Drone Attacks A Compulsion: Boucher" "The News" (01/06)

"Visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher Monday said that drone attacks had become a compulsion as attacks on the U.S. and allied forces in Afghanistan were very alarming."

"Delhi Using Attacks For Political Goals" "The Nation" (01/06)

"According to sources, President Asif Ali Zardari again made it clear to the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia, Richard Boucher that India is using Mumbai terrorist attacks for political goals against Pakistan."

"'Credible' Evidence Needed, Says Gilani" "Dawn" (01/06)

"The Prime Minister apprised Mr. Boucher of efforts being made by Pakistan to defuse tension with India and his government's commitment to take action against any Pakistani national if credible evidence is provided."

"Repatriate Pakistani Citizens, America Told" "The News" (01/06)

"The political leadership also brought up the issue of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui and the five Pakistani nationals in Guantanamo Bay prison who Pakistan feels should be repatriated as soon as possible. The notorious Guantanamo Bay of the Bush era is being closed down by the new administration taking over in Washington. According to official statements, Boucher held out an assurance that he would take up the cases of Dr. Aafia and five Pakistani nationals in Guantanamo prison with the relevant U.S. authorities for their expeditious repatriation to Pakistan."

"Tension-Free Ties With India Govt. Aim, Says PM" "The News" (01/06)

"Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani said on Monday that Pakistan stands for tension-free relations with all the countries including India, as tension would bring no benefit to any state.... About his meeting with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher, the Prime Minister said he urged the need for resolving the Kashmir issue, which was the core issue between Pakistan and India."

"FBI To Pursue Mumbai Probe 'To Its Conclusion': U.S. Envoy" "Daily Times" (01/06)

"The U.S. said on Monday that an FBI team would take the evidence it has gathered in the Mumbai terror attacks to Islamabad and pursue the probe into the terror strike 'to its conclusion,' according to a report in the Indian Express, U.S. Ambassador in Delhi David C. Mulford was quoted as saying."

"India Rules Out Joint Probe" "The Post" (01/06)

"Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, Indian Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Memon ruled out joint investigation with Pakistan and vowed to go to any extent for the evidence of Mumbai attacks."

"India Launches Diplomatic Offensive" "Daily Times" (01/06)

"India began a diplomatic offensive to build pressure on Pakistan on Monday, with its Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon briefing foreign envoys to New Delhi on the 'evidence' linking Pakistan-based organizations in the terrorist attacks in Mumbai in November. Menon briefed envoys from over a dozen countries including the U.S., the U.K., Israel, France, Japan, Germany, Turkey and Canada."

"Jihad Obligatory If India Attacks Pakistan: Ulema" "The News" (01/06)

"Noted religious scholars participating in a conference with political leaders of the country in Lahore on Monday announced a religious edict (Fatwa) that in case of any Indian attack on the country, Jihad would become obligatory upon every citizen of Pakistan."

"Delhi Promoting Western Agenda: JI" "The News" (01/06)

"The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has warned against Indian rulers' hegemonic designs in the region with the support of western powers by creating a war like situation, observing that Delhi was going to suffer dearly in case of any misadventure, sated a resolution passed by JI Shoora meeting at Mansoor, issued on Monday."

"Pakistan Hopes For Economic Relief From New U.S. Congress" "Dawn" (01/06)

"Pakistan hopes that the new U.S. Congress, which will be sworn in on Tuesday, will approve two crucial bills that can help revive the country's ailing economy. One of them - the Biden-Lugar bill - can bring as much as \$15 billion for Pakistan over a period of 10 years, while the other - the Reconstruction Opportunity Zones bill - would help establish specially-designated areas in Pakistan and Afghanistan that could export products to the U.S. without any duty."

"U.S.-Pakistan Military Cooperation On The Increase: WSJ Report" "Dawn" (01/06)

"Military cooperation between Pakistan and the United States has increased recently as both try to eliminate militants destabilizing the region, the Wall Street Journal reported on Monday."

"Israel Is Hell-Bent On Bringing Gaza To Its Knees" "The News" (01/06)

"Israeli warplanes on Monday pounded Gaza and carried intensive raids on Hamas targets with ground troops surrounding the main city. The death toll in besieged Gaza rose to at least 555 people during the 10-day offensive. Among Monday's victims were 13 members of a Palestinian family in an Israeli strike on their home in a refugee camp, Palestinian medical officials said."

"Israel Rejects Call For Ceasefire" "The Nation" (01/06)

"Israeli troops battled Hamas fighters in Gaza's main city for the first time Monday - after dozens died in a day of clashes - while the government fended off worldwide calls for a ceasefire."

"Zardari Visits Kabul Today" "Daily Times" (01/06)

"President Asif Ali Zardari is flying to Afghanistan today (Tuesday) for a daylong visit that will include discussions with Afghan President Hamid Karzai on various bilateral issues."

"Army Wraps Up Khyber Operation; NATO Supply Route Reopened" "The Nation" (01/06)

"Pakistan on Monday reopened during day-time hours a key northwest

supply route for Western troops in Afghanistan, a local official said, as the army wrapped up an anti-militant drive in the area."

"Militants Kill Three 'U.S. Spies'" "Dawn" (01/06)

"Militants in North Waziristan killed three people on Monday after accusing them of spying for U.S. forces in Afghanistan."

"11 Bajaur Tribesmen Kidnapped In Mohmand" "Dawn" (01/06)

"Militants kidnapped 11 members of the Mandel tribe of Bajaur in Mohmand Agency on Monday and took them to an unspecified place."

Editorials/Op-eds

"Ground Offensive," an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/06)

"The U.S., which could have played a key role in the affair, has once again acted as a blind supporter of Israel's barbarities.... This would further strengthen the anti-U.S. sentiment across the Muslim world and provide the extremists and terrorists a cause clhbre, besides further marginalizing pro-U.S. and moderate regimes in the Arab and Muslim world."

"Blood And Terror In Gaza," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (01/06)

"Strangely enough those who support Israeli actions say they want to win the hearts and minds of Muslims. Gaza's blood-drenched streets are certainly not the best way of doing so. The Taliban hardly need to hone their brainwashing techniques, because America and the world powers are doing an excellent job for them. The images being watched on television live by millions would move any heart, except those immune to human suffering. The fire and smoke which have enveloped Gaza's skies serve as a better recruitment poster for the Taliban than any sermons in mosques or rallying cries emanating from Al Qaeda cells."

"Is Blood Of Muslims So Cheap?," an editorial in the popular rightist Urdu-language daily "Ausaf" (cir. 10,000) (01/23)

"The policies of Muslim countries are beyond our understanding as every Muslim state is doing nothing except rendering lips service. The oil-rich Arab states have a very effective weapon of petroleum, and if they terminate oil supply to Israel, it will not stand that 'attack.' The Muslim world must hold their rulers accountable for their failings, or else Muslims blood will continue to spill the world over."

"Bombardment On Palestinians - Silence Of West," an editorial in the leading mass circulation centrist Urdu daily "Jang" (cir. 300,000) (01/23)

"If Israel isn't ready to give Palestinians their fundamental and legal rights, the U.S. and other big powers are behind this aggressor, and they aren't paying heed to the UNSC resolutions, then Muslim states must not remain silent as they may also meet with same fate at the end of the day. If the Muslim world don't take serious note of this state of affair at this moment, they also will not live to tell the tale in the world."

"Israeli Aggression: Insensitivity Of Champion Of Human Rights," an editorial note in the Karachi-based, pro Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (01/23)

"This is the height of insensitivity of the international community that the U.S. and Britain have rejected the resolution in UNSC moved by Libya to stop Israeli violence, and the European Union has resorted to keep silence on this issue. All the so-called champion of human rights, and the NGOs have also vanished from the scene, as perhaps they are stunned with horror? The role of Arab states are also not very laudable, as they are still busy in consultation instead of taking any practical steps to stop Israeli assaults."

"International Community Must Try To Stop Israeli Aggression," an editorial in liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (1/2)

"According to a news report, there have been worldwide protests against Israeli ground assault on Gaza and protestors also set fire to Israeli, U.S. and British flags. These protests are proof that the world wants peace not war. Respecting the sentiments of the protestors, Israel must immediately stop its aggression in Gaza.

"Israeli Aggression In Gaza," an editorial in the Lahore-based Urdu daily "Waqt" (cir. 10,000) (01/06)

"Israeli aggression will not be controlled by UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon's mere expressions of concern. The United Nation's existence itself would be endangered if the bloodshed of innocent Palestinians is not stopped; otherwise the UN might meet the same fate as the League of Nations."

"Israeli Aggression And International Insensitivity," an editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (cir. 5000) (01/06)

"In a situation where the international organization and world powers have failed to provide security to the Palestinians, the Muslim states should reorganize their resources and manpower for self-defense. No matter how large our number is, we will continue to be trampled like ants under the feet of imperialist powers until we become powerful in the fields of education, politics, economy and technology."

"Storing Anger," an editorial in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/06)

"The twin silences of Obama and the collective Muslim world speak to us. On the one hand we may be seeing the first indications of which way the Obama presidency is going to swing regarding an issue crucial to the Muslim world generally; and on the other we see the weakness of the institutions which may be said to represent the Muslim world. Between the two silences sit the children of Gaza, storing both anger and energy against the day when they are old enough to discharge both destructively. The vast human battery that is Gaza is unlikely to be drained by Israeli action, rather the reverse is true - a fact which seems to have escaped the Israeli planners of foreign and military policy."

"Ground Assault On Gaza," an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (01/06)

"The deafening silence in the Arab world, perhaps not to annoy the United States which is the main backer of Israel, has encouraged Tel Aviv to suppress the Palestinians under the pretext of responding to rocket attacks by Hamas, that is controlling Gaza.... Leadership of the neighboring countries, who have opted for silence and witnessing the unfolding tragedy must also get out of their slumber and keep in mind that today it was Gaza, tomorrow theirs turn may also come."

"Israeli Savagery," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (01/06)

"It is surprising that the U.S., which can influence a peaceful settlement, is openly siding with Israel, turning a blind eye to the brutalities being committed by the Jewish state against the struggling people of Palestine.... The need is to tailor some arrangement through peaceful means to settle the issue of Palestine. Even European governments, and the media, are drawing a clear line between the aggressor and the oppressed, pressing Israel to exercise restraint."

"Israel's Refusal Is Insult To International Community," an editorial in liberal and independent Sindhi daily "Kawish" (01/06)

"U.S. is leading the world in war on terror, but surprisingly it remains silent over Israel's state terrorism against the Palestinians. Its all-out support to Israel shows that it is not sincere in its campaign against terrorism. It seems that this war is meant to safeguard the American interests only. The role of U.S. and Britain, the champion of free world, does not match with their actions. Why cannot they stop Israel from these atrocities?"

"Gaza Carnage," an op-ed by Tayyab Siddiqui in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/06)

"The ongoing massacre and criminal silence of the world and the OIC in the face of such savagery is bound to radicalize the Arab masses.... President-elect Obama has maintained studious silence but his 'unshakeable commitment to Israel's security' inspires little hope of any significant change in the U.S. position. In the present crisis, Hamas may be facing Israel along but as the Palestinians have demonstrated, their spirit of resistance shall not break and eventually, will prevail over all odds."

"Trio Of Evil: The Entire Muslim Ummah Is The Target, Not Just Pakistan," an editorial in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 125,000) (01/06)

"It is evident that India is all set for waging a war against Pakistan at the behest of America. Indian intelligence agency can stage the Mumbai attack like drama elsewhere in India to create a justification for action against Pakistan.... Perhaps, that is what Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood meant when he said that everything is not hunky-dory despite decrease in the level of tension.... The satanic triangle of America, Israel and India has begun a bloody drama in Palestine, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Iraq and a conspiracy is afoot to embroil nuclear Pakistan in this game."

"The Blame Game," an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/06)

"As New Delhi is desperately trying to implicate Pakistan's intelligence apparatus in the acts of terrorism on its soil, Islamabad needs to counter the move by launching a strong diplomatic offensive.... Normalization of relations between the two nuclear-armed neighbors is not possible so long as India continues to blame Pakistan for last month's carnage without actually furnishing any evidence."

"U.S-India Defense Deal," an editorial note in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 125,000) (01/06)

"India and America have agreed on a defense pact worth 2.1 billion dollars which will include supply of 8 planes for Indian navy. This agreement is enough to prove that America is making India dangerous for the entire region."

"Religious Hatred And Suicide Attacks," an editorial note in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (06/24)

"Suicide attacks had been known to be driven by religious hatred and prejudice. Looking at D.I. Khan suicide attack it seems that the element of vengeance against security personnel has also become a part of these attacks.... The Ulema should see as to how this venom has been injected in the minds of the people and how to get rid of it."

"Suicide-Bombing At D.I. Khan," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (01/06)

"A young boy aged below 18 killed himself in Dera Ismail Khan.... He was another in the line of victims of the clerics who train young boys as suicide-bombers for the Taliban. There is no doubt that he was accompanied by a 'minder' who would have killed him if he had not carried out his 'mission.' Some clerics under the Taliban boast of converting normal human beings into suicide-bombers 'in six hours flat.' Increasingly, the bombers are young boys who cannot turn away after once being trapped by their handlers."

Patterson